

THE BEACON

A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND THE HOME

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Dandelions.

BY MARIAN WARNER WILDMAN.

WHEN the brooks are dancing, when
the robins sing,
When we catch the flashing of a bluebird's
wing,
When our happy voices welcome in the
Spring,

Then the little dandelions, neighborly and
dear,
Come in tens of thousands; blossom far and
near;
Brim the meadows over with their merry
cheer!

Silent little army, lacking fife and drum,
How the little children of the dreary slum
Will rejoice to greet you, laughing when you
come!

Her Literary Journey.

BY FRANCES CHARLES.

NANNIE had heard May speak about
a book called "Little Journeys to the
Homes of Famous People," and this
recollection was her real inspiration; but
what indirectly inspired the inspiration was a
new hat. Nannie needed one very badly,
not only because nearly all the girls got new
hats each season, but because of the new
school. Mother and May did not know how
hard it was to be a grammar-school pupil and
yet wear last year's clothes. Still a new
dress was out of the question, and Nannie had
slowly made up her mind that the tan with
its plaid trimmings was very nice indeed.

It was her hat which was irremediable.
It had been old for some time, and now, even
with her fresh hair ribbon tied jauntily under
it, the little headpiece was not exactly what
a grammar-school girl should wear. There
was no way to add to it, and Nannie could not
find a worse word than irremediable to ex-
press its shortcomings. For one reason, she
had not progressed any farther; and for an-
other the adjective would be very appropriate
if so applied, even by a college professor.

Miss Tab wrote a department for the *Me-
teor*. Perhaps to you or to me this journal
would not seem so wonderful; but to Nannie,
who made no comparisons, it was very smart
and sparkling, and in her own little heart
she was ambitious to write like the lady who
edited that portion of it. As it was a small
sheet, Miss Tabitha did all the writing for
her department; and such variety! She
told mother how to cure colds. She told May
how to cut her old dresses into the latest
styles, and she had bright opinions on the
world's happenings, while every now and then
there appeared light little verses on the affec-
tions or the seasons, also written by the busy
woman. So now you can follow Nannie's
inspiration and see how it urged her to call
on Miss Tab.

May was attending high school, and the



Photo by A. F. Snyder.

HIS ONLY TOY.

best clothes had to go to her (that went with-
out saying), because, much as Nannie wanted
pretty things, she couldn't imagine May being
deprived of them. She was a very just child,
and the thought of pretty, timid May without
that new hat with the quill in it never en-
tered the little sister's calculations. Still she
wanted her own new hat very much, and so
she made up her mind to earn money to get
it.

To begin to think of earning money is very
interesting indeed, especially when one is not
twelve years old, because, as magazines might
express it, if they wrote of such a young sub-
ject, the fields open to such youthful beginners
are limited. Certainly a little girl might run
errands, or pull bastings for a dressmaker;

but almost another season would roll around
before the sum she might earn that way
would be large enough to buy anything so
ambitious as a hat, and Nannie realized that
she had to try a get-rich-quick idea. So she
decided to make her literary journey.

Miss Tabitha, ignorant of the attention and
the homage that was about to be paid her,
was watering her back garden. It was still
full of beautiful things, because flowers grow
late in California, and Miss Tab was trying
to retie some sagging vines, and at the same
time compose some lines about a big black
pansy, when she heard a voice at the door-
way.

"I want to speak to Miss Tabitha, please,
I mean—Miss—Jenkins!"

It sounded a very scared voice, but ended with fine bravery.

"Will you please tell her a reporter wants to see her."

The dear little mite of a woman to whom Nannie addressed these words led her into a cosy room with inviting cushions everywhere, an oak desk in one corner, and a wee rocking-chair by its side, as if the busy writer had but to raise her eyes to see her tender charge and faithful companion.

"This is daughter's room," the little lady said, and then she went out with her small shoulders straightened, and her lips all a-tremble with the joy that a reporter's call meant to them both.

"Tab, Tab, dear!" she cried from the diminutive porch, covered with honeysuckle, "you are to come in at once and let me finish the watering for you. Some one is here about your writing. I knew you'd be found out by everybody soon, my good, good child!"

When Miss Tab entered the room, she was not beautiful at all, because she still bore marks of gardening on her plain dress and on her hair, so rumpled by the big sunbonnet she had worn. Though her face was not perfect as those of her heroines were, she yet seemed to bring in a sort of beauty because her old mother had called her "good, good."

And, for her part, neither was Nannie at her very best. She had chosen a low window-seat, because there she was able to stretch her quaint little dress well over her stockinged knees to make her appear like an older girl; but of course she had to rise when Miss Tabitha entered, and this brought her skirt to its every-day length, proving her to be a very embarrassed little person who did not look like the usual reporter. Indeed she felt sorry to be only a little girl; but, as there was no way to mend it in a hurry, she began in her honest manner.

"Maybe I shouldn't have said I was a reporter, because I'm just beginning to be one—right now."

"I have to earn some money to buy a new hat, and you're not in the 'Little Journeys' book because I looked for you; and so I am goin' to write about you."

Miss Tabitha drew a deep breath as if she did it for Nannie.

"Why are you going to write about me?" she asked.

This simple question swept all Nannie's barriers away. Her eyes softened.

"Some one ought to write about you," she returned. "You have written better things than any one else I know. If they will let me, I am goin' to put you into 'Famous Poets' and into 'Famous Writers' as well. It is only right to have you in both places, and then, maybe, I can buy two hats, one for May, too!"

She did not say whether she meant to drop her g's in her article as well as in her eager speech, and Miss Tab took her quite in earnest.

"Why do you want a new hat?" she asked.

"I have been promoted into an older grade, and all the girls will have one. Mother can't buy one for me, and so I thought of writin' about you, so they would pay me for it."

Miss Tabitha was greatly touched.

"I am afraid if you wrote such an article, no one would publish it, dear," she said. "I am not clever nor brilliant a bit like the people in such books, because I only write to support mother. It is a labor of love. Every one must know it is just for that reason, because no one has ever noticed the columns."

"We have," Nannie protested stoutly.

"Sometimes when we have nothing much for dinner, you tell May some easy way to make things different; and once, when mother was very sick, one of your prescriptions helped her. And, when I read your poems, even about the moon or a river, I want to be a better girl. You make everything have a good purpose."

All at once, without a sign of sorrow, two big tears welled into Miss Tabitha's eyes.

"You dear little girl!" she cried. "No article you might write could please me more than your visit has done. First you make mother very happy because she has been waiting years and years for the world to call me famous, and now she will wander along through her dreams,—you know mother is a sad, sweet dreamer,—thinking a real reporter has come at last! Then, after making mother happy, you bring all these sweet praises to me. I seemed to be earning only a living and doing no good to any one at all, but your praise has shown me how beautiful life really is, like my wonderful gardening,—the putting of little slips and seeds into the dark earth, and then after faith and patience we have such lovely flowers!"

She reached out and, drawing Nannie to her, kissed either warm young cheek.

"Do you think," smiled she, "that your mother will mind it greatly if we make a hat out of my scrap-box, as 'Miss Tabitha' advises people to do in the *Meteor*?"

I Think of You.

BY MARGARET BURROUS MARTIN.

SOMETIMES the world seems sad and old;
Sometimes my heart with fear grows cold;
Sometimes the sun seems dimmed for aye;
Sometimes my faith all fades away;
Sometimes my God seems made of clay;

And then I think of you,
Mother, of you.

And then the world grows young and gay;
And courage true drives fear away;
And cloudless in the sun's white ray
Shines forth my faith as clear as day;
And your God listens while I pray;

Just when I think of you,
Mother, of you.

A Just Balance.

BY MARGARET BLAINE.

"Can you dust?" asked the man, to whom Louis had applied for work.

"Yes, sir," said Louis, feeling thankful now that mother had taught him to help with the dusting on Saturday mornings.

"Very well, then: I have half a day's work for you, and I will give you fifty cents if you do it well."

"I will, sir," said Louis, eagerly. He needed fifty cents very much.

The man led the way to an inner office, where a number of books were piled on the shelves. He supplied Louis with several big pieces of cheesecloth, and told him to dust all the books carefully, and replace them on the shelves.

With a light heart Louis attacked the first shelf. He put the books on the floor in their order, wiped the shelf, and then, taking up each book in turn, wiped it and put it on the shelf. He knew he was doing it well. Not a bit of dust remained, and each book was just in the place from which he had taken it. He dusted the second and third shelf in like careful manner. But when he came to the fourth shelf, he found no dust. He rubbed his finger over various books. They were

quite clean. He went to the next shelf and the next, and found that some one else had dusted them, and all the remaining ones, in the room. There was nothing more for him to do, and his heart sank. Of course he couldn't expect fifty cents for such a bit of work. He went to the outer office to tell the man about it. The girl at the typewriter said Mr. Granger was out, and he should sit down and wait.

It was quite a long wait, and, when Mr. Granger came at length, he glanced at the waiting boy.

"Hullo," he said. "Is the work done? Here's your fifty cents."

Before Louis had time to think he was outside the door with the fifty cents in his hand. He started to walk away. He was suddenly light-hearted. He had the needed fifty cents after all. But he hadn't gone far before a troublesome feeling began to grow in his heart.

"It's not cheating," he insisted. "The dusting is all done as good as anything. And I'd have done it if some one else hadn't been before me."

There were some words that kept running through his head about a false balance and a just weight. He could see his deed as if it were a little picture. There was the fifty cents on one side of the scales, and his few minutes' work on the other side, so light that it flew 'way up.

"It's just like not giving right change," said Louis, "or taking home twice as many things as you paid for."

He was hurrying back to the office by this time. To his great relief Mr. Granger was alone. He laid the fifty cents down, and explained in a low tone about the work he had found already done.

"Well, well!" said Mr. Granger. "So you believe in giving a good measure of work in return for my good money. That's the kind of boy I like to hire. I won't have to stay here and see that you do things. You may do some errands for me and keep the fifty cents. And you go to school through the week, of course; but how would you like to come and help me each Saturday? It will be a dollar a week."

Louis couldn't quite tell how he would like it. He was too happy to express himself, but Mr. Granger appeared satisfied.

"Suppose I'd have given a false balance," said Louis as he hurried on his errand. "Wouldn't I have just been cheating myself?"

Mislaïd—A Mother.

A small boy with a rather lonesome expression walked into the county clerk's office in Denver, says the *Times* of that city. He gazed about him for a few minutes, and finally approached a deputy.

"Please, sir," the lad said timidly, "have you seen anything of a lady round here?"

"Why, yes," answered the officer, "I've seen several."

"Well, have you seen any without a little boy?" continued the lad, anxiously.

"Yes," replied the deputy.

"Well," said the little chap, as a relieved look crossed his face, "I'm the little boy. Where's the lady?"

Liberty is not idleness, but an unconstrained use of time,—the choice of work and of exercise. To be free, in a word, is not to be doing nothing, but to be one's own master as to what one ought or ought not to do.

BRUYÈRE.

The War-club.

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.

FOR some time the Lakewood nine had seen an elderly gentleman watch their practice with great interest, and one day he came up to them with something in his hand.

"Boys, I've got a bat here I played with once; and, as you're getting ready for that game with Hope Hill, I thought one of you might use it."



A WILD PITCH.

As he held it out, Malcolm, the captain, took it. He laughed as he swung it. "Say, it's a regular telegraph pole! It's no good—for anything except kindling. Wells," he said to a boy standing near, "here's a bat you could hit something with, perhaps. Try it!"

The others laughed as they went out on the field; but Wells, seeing the hurt expression on the old man's face, asked if he might see the bat.

"Certainly, my boy: that other young man didn't seem to think much of it, but it is a good bat. I've noticed you don't get into the game very much. What's the trouble?"

Wells answered frankly, "The reason is, I can field all right, but I can't hit: so you see, I don't get much chance unless one of the other boys doesn't play."

"That so? Now perhaps I can help you, Wells," the other said, smiling. "My name is Stetson. I'll show you how to use the bat."

Wells knew that out of sympathy for Mr. Stetson he had placed himself in difficulty. The bat could not be used under present rules of the game, so very gently he explained what was wrong. When he had finished, the old man laughed.

"Why, what an old fellow I am getting to be!" he exclaimed, pounding his cane in a way that was a habit of his. "I never thought of that, but of course the rules change. The bat's too big and long. Say, Wells," his wrinkled face was thoughtful, "I have a boy friend visiting at my house who knows quite a little about baseball.

I'll get him to tell me how to change the bat, and I'll do it. You come up this evening. What do you say?"

Wells wavered. He had other plans for the evening; but Mr. Stetson's face was shining with interest, and Wells agreed.

Early in the evening Wells went to Mr. Stetson's home, and met a husky, genial fellow who was introduced to Wells as George. After the greeting George said: "Wells, Mr. Stetson has made this over into a bat that's a good one. You and I knew that before it wouldn't do, but now—look it over."

When Wells drew it from its new case, he gasped, for it was a bat now that looked like the costly ones he had seen the big league players carry. "It's a corker!" he exclaimed.

George smiled at his enthusiasm. "That wood has been seasoning ever since Mr. Stetson was a young fellow; and, when it strikes a ball, believe me that ball is going like a bullet!"

Wells' pleasure darkened when he remembered he was a poor batter. He told George so.

"Never mind," the big fellow said, "what you can't do, you can learn to do. I play a little ball: I'll show what I know."

As a result of the invitation, Wells had two lessons before the game—long hard drills in batting. When they were over, George said: "We'll be down to the game; and, if you get a chance to play, just remember the points I've given you: keep cool, and watch the pitcher—all the time."

That afternoon the biggest crowd of the season gathered. The stands were crowded, gay with colors, and excitement was everywhere.

Wells was feeling a little blue. He had been asked about the old gentleman's bat which the boys had dubbed a "war-club," and had laughed with them not telling them that his new bat was the "war-club" remodelled. But he was not happy, for he was not to play.

Rapidly the innings went by and neither side scored. It began to look as if Woodward, the tall Hope Hill pitcher, was too much for Lakewood. But in the ninth inning he grew too confident, and Malcolm

banged the ball deep into right field. Before it was relayed back he was on third base. All that was needed now was a single safe hit to bring him home and win the game.

The Lakewood section rose in a body and cheered.

Woodward's face whitened with determination, and he struck out the next two batters on six pitched balls. Hope Hill cheered.

Malcolm on third base was the picture of disgust and despair.

The next batter for Lakewood had struck out every time before. As he started up this time to bat, Malcolm's voice came sharply from third base, "Send Wells in!"

Wells wondered if he had heard aright, but the umpire's growl "Hurry up there!" aroused him. He drew the bat from its case. He knew that Malcolm had decided he could do no worse than the other batter had been doing: it was time to take a chance.

As he stepped to the plate and was recognized, a low murmur of despair went up from Lakewood: they knew he was a poor batter. But clear above the disheartening murmur came an old man's cheery voice: "Go for it, lad! Go for it!"

Wells' heart leaped at the words; he smiled; he swung the bat backward and forward easily; and a wonderful feeling of confidence went over him as he felt his body poise perfectly in the correct batting position George had shown him.

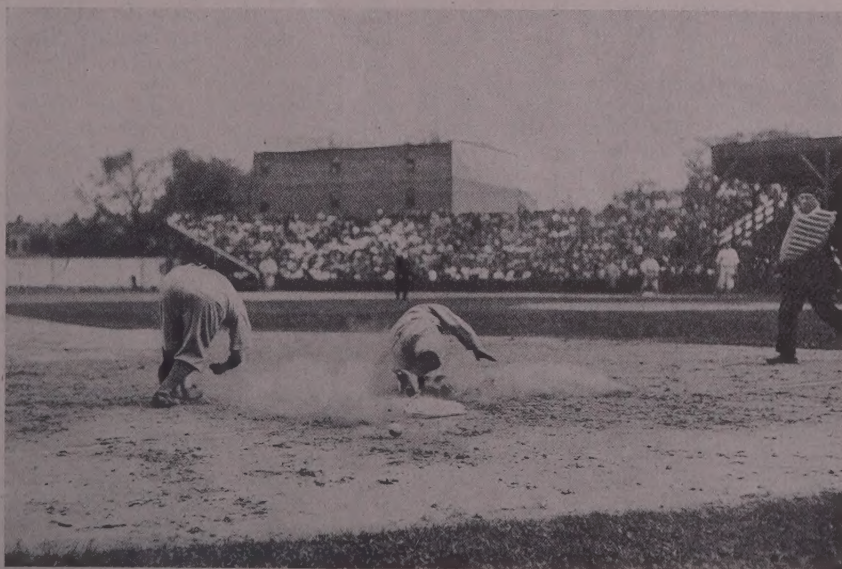
The first ball came fast and hard—an incurve! Wells saw it would be a bad ball to hit, so let it go by. "Strike one!" Hope Hill cheered again. "He's easy, Woody!" a Hope player shouted.

Wells smiled again. Woodward looked at him curiously.

The next ball was a slow, wide outcurve, and Wells missed it by inches. Hope Hill's cheer rang out again. The crisis was coming.

Wells watched Woodward closely: he saw that Woodward did not shift the ball in his glove as he would for a curve. It was going to be a slant!

Down toward the plate the white streak came—no curve this time! A fast, speedy slant! Wells was crouched to meet it—he did! He raced across the white bag at first base. Lakewood's cheers rang in



SAFE AT SECOND!

his ears. Far in deep centre the fielder was still chasing the ball. Malcolm had crossed the plate, and was coming toward him with outstretched arms of joy.

In the dressing-room Malcolm said: "Wells, what's come over you? You looked like a veteran at the plate, and the way that ball went—phew! Where'd you get the bat? It drives a ball like a shot!"

Wells turned from his locker. "Fellows, that bat you are looking at is—Mr. Stetson's 'war-club'!" Then he told of his lessons.

There was a rap on the door, and Mr. Stetson came in with George.

Malcolm went forward. "Say, Mr. Stetson, I want to beg your pardon for those words of mine. I never stop to think when I say things, but I'm going to learn. Anyway, your bat is a dandy!" He turned to George. "I don't know your name, but we thank you, too."

The tall fellow spoke his last name, and the boys gasped: it was the name of a crack pitcher of a Western university.

Wells gasped, too, for he had known him only as George; but he knew that Mr. Stetson had helped a few boys through college, and George was one of them.

Later, when Wells tried to thank his big friend for his coaching, the other stopped him. "Wells, Mr. Stetson has been very good to me; and, when you were kind to him down at the field, you were kind to me—that's the way kindness spreads. I've tried to do by you as you did by him. One good turn deserves another, you know."

Spring.

WHEN all the willow leaves are out,
And birds and butterflies about,
And all the sky a dreamy blue—
I want to be outdoors, don't you?

Then every bird and butterfly
That goes so idly drifting by,
And every leaf on every tree,
All seem to call and call to me!

ROSE ISABEL GREELY,
in Youth's Companion.

A Modern Hero.

Last July the gangplank connecting the steamer "Flyer" with its dock in Seattle broke under the rush of a crowd of passengers. Sixty men, women, and children were plunged into the cold, deep waters of Puget Sound. Their danger was extreme. A colored bootblack on the dock—just a boy—leaped into the water to try to save some of them. He rescued ten women and children, among them one drowning woman who clung so tightly to him that he was all but drowned before a skiff came to his rescue. He was an hour in the water, and was very near collapse when brought to the dock again. He fell ill and had to be nursed back to recovery.

The mayor of Seattle publicly thanked him. "My boy," he said, "you are a credit to your race and to humanity!"

But the bootblack was as modest as he was plucky. "I don't care about being a hero," he replied, smiling, "but I hope my mother in Pennsylvania will hear about it."

That was all he cared about praise or recognition—that his mother would be glad. Is not that one mark of the true hero?

The Wellspring.

Iduna's Apples.

BY FRANCES M. DADMUN.

LONG, long ago, when this old world of ours was centuries younger than it is now, people believed that there were many gods instead of one, and that they lived in a marvelous country beyond the clouds, called Asgard. This country was surrounded by a high wall, and its only connection with our earth was a rainbow bridge, one side of which was red, with fire to keep the giants from crossing; for the gods did not like the giants. One of them named Thiassi was especially hateful, he was so cold and icy of disposition. If he came anywhere near Asgard, the gods shivered as we do when we feel north winds blowing down upon us at Christmas.

Within Asgard, as long as Thiassi kept away, it was warm as summer. Soft winds made music in the leaves of the trees and the billowy grass. Birds sang and crickets chirped. But there was never a sound of the roar of a train, or of heavy wheels grinding on pavements, or of a factory whistle; for it was spring in the land of the gods at the end of the rainbow bridge.

There were flowers, too, so many that the children could pick all they wanted without any one knowing the difference. There were violets and buttercups, daisies and daffodils. Yet more beautiful than these were the apple-blossoms in Iduna's orchard. Iduna loved them so much that she spent most of her time in the orchard. Because we grow to be like the things we love, Iduna was like an apple-blossom. Her cheeks were pink, and her dress was like the green leaves in shadow. Her eyes were brown as the branches of the trees after a rain, but in her hair there were always gleams of sunshine.

Iduna was wife of the god Bragi and a friend of all the gods. They used to visit her in the orchard, but they came less often in spring than in autumn, since they liked apples better than blossoms. These were most unusual apples. They were yellow as gold and very juicy, but this was not the best of them. Whenever a god felt himself growing old or tired or discouraged, as he often did when Thiassi's cold winds blew over Asgard, he would go to Iduna's orchard and taste one of her apples. Before he had eaten half of it, he would feel young and rested and hopeful,—as Mother Earth must feel when spring comes. So the gods never worried for fear of trouble coming, as long as they could find Iduna in her apple orchard.

Yet trouble did come. One of the gods, Loki, was a mischievous fellow. A practical joker, he had made his friends ridiculous more than once. But such people are caught themselves sometimes, and so it happened with Loki.

Odin, Hoenir, and Loki had gone on a picnic all by themselves. They built a fire, and hung over it a huge, iron kettle for boiling their supper. They filled the kettle with fresh water from a near-by spring, put in the meat, and sat down to watch the snapping fire

and tell stories. But they could not tell stories very well, they were so hungry. Presently Odin lifted the lid of the kettle, expecting an odor of savory meat; but the water had not even begun to boil. He put back the lid; and, when Hoenir and Loki had piled on more wood, they sat down again.

The water began to boil. It bubbled so that the lid of the kettle rattled. Hoenir rose next, and thrust a fork into the meat, while Odin and Loki sat with their mouths watering. But the meat was as raw as when it was put in. Hoenir dropped it back in disgust, and the water splashed up and burned his fingers.

This time Odin and Loki ran for more wood, and then they sat down again and waited in hungry silence. It seemed a long time, but it was probably only five minutes, when Loki jumped up and thrust his fork into the meat. No, it was not done yet!

The gods were certainly discouraged this time. Perhaps they would have gone home to supper at once, had not one of them looked up to see an enormous eagle perched on the stout limb of an oak tree.

Being gods, they were not surprised to hear the eagle speak.

"If you are willing to let me have my share," said the eagle, "it shall soon be boiled."

The three agreed, and took off the lid of the kettle. The eagle flew down and dipped his beak fearlessly in the boiling water. How much do you suppose he took? He snatched three quarters of all there was in the pot!

Loki, who was the hungriest of the three, lost his temper. Seizing a big stick, he whacked the eagle between its shoulders. Then a horrible thing happened. The stick clung to the eagle's back, and, try as he would, Loki could not let go. The eagle rose high in the air carrying Loki. It flew and flew, dragging Loki now over rocks, now over the tops of trees. His clothing was torn and his flesh was scratched. Finally the eagle spoke again, and Loki learned that it was not a real eagle at all, but the giant Thiassi, who sometimes took the form of an eagle. If Loki had only known this sooner, he would have been more careful not to beat him, but in any case he should not have lost his temper.

Thiassi told Loki he would let him go if he would promise to bring to him Iduna and her apples out of Asgard. Loki was willing to promise any thing just then, and he crawled back to Odin and Hoenir in a wretched plight.

When his scratches were healed so that he was presentable once more, he went to see Iduna.

He found her, beautiful as ever in her green gown, bending over a box of the golden fruit. She offered him an apple, for Loki looked worn after his late experience with Thiassi. He took it, but, instead of eating

it, looked at it critically. He saw a shadow of surprise pass over Iduna's clear eyes. People were not in the habit of criticising her apples.

"Iduna," said Loki, "a few days ago I saw apples in the forest outside Asgard which seemed to me larger and more golden than yours."

"It can't be possible," cried Iduna, indignantly; but in her heart she was frightened, for she was proud and justly so, because she could give new life to the gods.

"Perhaps not," said Loki, thoughtfully, "yet they seemed to me most remarkable apples. What do you say to our taking these in the box and strolling out to see if there is any difference? It is only a little way outside Asgard."

Iduna was eager to prove that her apples were the larger, so she and Loki took the box between them and went together out of the protected city of the gods to a large forest.

Iduna looked up, expecting to see apple trees, but instead she saw a black shadow cross the sun. It grew larger and darker, and then she discovered to her horror that it was a powerful eagle. Down it swooped, and Iduna grew cold. It caught her up, apples and all, and carried her off to the land of the giants, while hateful Loki walked quietly back to Asgard.

When the gods learned that Iduna was missing, there was trouble indeed. Her husband, Bragi, missed her as soon as he came home that night. When she was not there to welcome him, he felt tired and sick, and hurried to the orchard after an apple. Alas! the box of apples was gone, too! Poor Bragi suddenly felt that he was very old.

It was amazing how quickly the other gods felt the same way. They shivered as if a blighting wind had passed over Asgard. They grew old and wrinkled and gray. They wrapped their cloaks about them and leaned on staffs when they walked. Even the flowers were shrivelled and blackened, as when a frost nips them. Iduna's orchard was the saddest of all, with its falling petals and drooping leaves.

This was exactly what Thiassi wanted when he stole Iduna. He had carried her off very carefully, not dragging her over rocks and trees as he had Loki. He was satisfied to keep her in Giant Land, for he knew that she was the spirit of summer and of youth, and that without her the gods must live in a perpetual winter of his making.

It was not long before the gods found out what Loki had done. He was usually the cause of trouble in Asgard, and this time he was threatened so fiercely that he confessed, and said that he would try his very best to get Iduna back.

So he borrowed the falcon feathers of the goddess Freyja, and flew off to Giant Land in search of Iduna. He found her shivering in a rocky cave. It was a fearful place. Winter as we know it is never without the promise of spring. We have wood and coal and oil for fires. We know that the bare trees will soon be covered with leaves. The sunset skies are gorgeous as the flowers of summer or delicate as those of spring. But the sky was gray in the land of the giants, and there were no trees,—only rocks, black, steep rocks, shelving down into the cruel sea. There was no sound except the screaming of sea-fowl, the roar of the waves, the howling of the wind.

Iduna was glad to see Loki, for he came from home. She told him that Thiassi was out fishing but might return any moment.

As there was no time to lose, Loki cast a spell and turned Iduna into a sparrow, and they flew off together toward Asgard.

They were not out of sight when Thiassi came home. He discovered at once that Iduna was gone, and, seeing a falcon and a sparrow flying in the distance, he gave chase. Being stronger, he gained on them rapidly. Now they could see the walls of Asgard. Iduna and Loki flew as fast as they could, but they were sure that Thiassi was coming nearer and nearer. They could almost hear the rushing of his broad wings.

When the gods saw what was happening, they forgot that they were old and tired, and hurriedly gathered bundles of chips which they piled on the walls of Asgard. If only Iduna and Loki could get over first! They were close now, but just behind was the terrible Thiassi. The gods could feel the icy wind from his wings. Then a shout went up. Iduna and Loki had sailed over the walls. A second more, and the gods had applied matches to their piles of chips, which blazed up hotly.

Thiassi tried to stop, but he was going too fast. He hated fire,—it weakened him. His

The Oak Tree Closet.

BY HELEN M. RICHARDSON.

Little Sunora sat on the back steps of Aunt Lydia's one-story house up among the Vermont hills, and wished that she was home with Josie and Margaret and—yes, and teasing Tom. For, when you are homesick, even a teasing brother is company.

But here—why, it was like Sunday all the time. Aunt Lydia didn't have time to talk much, she was so busy; and there didn't seem to be anything for a little girl to do except to sit on the doorstep, just as Sunora was doing, and wish she was at home where something was going on.

Pretty soon Aunt Lydia came to the door; and, when she saw Sunora's sober little face, she must have felt sorry for her, for she came right out and sat down beside her and asked her if she wouldn't like to see the china dishes her mother used to play with.

"Dishes my—mother used to play with, Aunt Lydia?" Sunora exclaimed, gulping down the sob in her throat, "oh, I'd love to see them!"



ON GUARD.

wings drooped, and he fell heavily. It is needless to say that he never troubled Asgard again; but he did not altogether perish, for Odin took his eyes and fixed them, two bright stars, in the firmament.

How glad they were to see Iduna! Loki cast off the spell which had turned her into a sparrow, and the gods carried her in triumphal procession back to her orchard. When she entered it, the birds took their heads from under their wings, and there were little, low chirpings which presently swelled into song. A breeze scattered the last of the dead leaves, and the gods saw that the brown branches were dotted with leaf-buds. While they knew that they must wait for the apples, yet the gods were happy because it was spring, and spring means life and hope.

Such is the old, old story of Iduna to which children still listen. "And the moral of it all," said a kindly philosopher, "is that selfishness never pays." Do you see why, I wonder?

China dishes were playthings too costly for Josie and Margaret and herself, and to think that her mother—and probably Aunt Lydia—had been allowed such a privilege seemed very strange. But, when Sunora beheld the dishes, it seemed stranger still.

Aunt Lydia led her out to a large oak tree and removed a stone which concealed an opening like a miniature cave; and there, arranged in neat rows around the sides of this little tree-trunk room, were bits of broken china, some of them thin and delicate like the dishes Sunora's mother used only when she had her "bestest" company.

The little girl's face clouded over when she beheld the jagged array. "Didn't my mother have any better playthings than those?" she queried, with a scornful little gesture towards the unattractive array.

"Why, we didn't seem to want any better ones," Aunt Lydia asserted in a surprised tone. "Your mother and I wouldn't have exchanged this china closet and its contents

for the best furnished playhouse in the United States," she declared.

"I guess p'r'aps it is because I thought it was going to be 'grown-up' china dishes," Sunora apologized. She was on her knees now, fingering the odd bits with a look of dawning interest upon her face.

"Why—o—o—! here is a piece with little pink rosebuds all over it!" she exclaimed, lifting a section of a Dresden saucer. "And, oh, this piece of a blue cup is just like a plate on mamma's plate-rail at home, that she says came over in the 'Mayflower'! and here's a saucer with a windmill on it!"

Sunora had squeezed herself inside the tree trunk and was crawling around on her hands and knees, for the opening extended farther into the tree than she had thought it did; and way back in a corner she found some pewter dishes that her aunt informed her would bring a great price if she were to sell them; but that she couldn't seem to bring herself to the point of disturbing this old playhouse of her childhood.

"I don't wonder, Aunt Lydia. I wouldn't if I were you. Why, it is just like finding a pirate's cave in the woods!" Sunora delightedly exclaimed, fingering first one and then another of the quaint dishes and implements she found there, all more or less broken and defaced, but arranged in such an attractive manner around this fascinating little play-room that it did not seem to make any difference at all that they were only odd bits of china, broken and time-stained.

"I thought you would enjoy the dishes after you had once seen them. Your mother and I have spent many happy hours here," Aunt Lydia said, as she turned to go back to the house. "Stay here as long as you want to, only don't take anything away. I like to know that they are all here," she cautioned. And Sunora thought her aunt's voice sounded as her own did sometimes when she wanted to cry, but wouldn't.

There was no more sitting on the doorstep and swallowing back tears, after this. Sunora passed many happy hours in the oak tree playhouse; and, when she went home, it was with many regrets that she could not take the tree and its possessions along with her.

Our Beacon Party.

BY REV. GEORGE KENT.

[An account of one of the social evenings for the Sunday school of the Unitarian church of New Orleans.]

The ever-thoughtful and helpful Editor of *The Beacon* wants us to tell of our annual Beacon Party, so that the rest of you can use the idea of it and very likely improve on our way of carrying it out.

Well, the last party of the season for the boys and girls of our Unitarian church in New Orleans, the one that comes before the early summer picnic, we make our Beacon Party.

That rather obliges them all to keep their copies of *The Beacon* and to look them over pretty carefully; and it obliges the minister, or one of the teachers or grown folk, to have a magic lantern and to know how to make slides.

For the great feature of the Beacon Party consists of the riddles and puzzles that have been in the thirty or more *Beacons* since last summer. We add others sent in by the boys and girls of our Sunday-school, made, as their mothers say of cakes and pies, by the



A CUP OF COLD WATER.

same recipes, but home-made and so tasting better. We use, also, pictures, which such smart ministers and teachers and scholars as we have in our Sunday schools can easily get together, which illustrate some of the best stories that have been in the year's *Beacons*. The fun consists in throwing these riddles and puzzles and pictures on the screen, and having those at the party tell the answers, and join the pictures to the stories that belong to them.

Of course good ministers and teachers always help out in tight places, with little hints and half-answers. Then a few slides to laugh over, of which every enlightened minister has a store or knows how to get some, ends that part of the party.

It is followed by games that have been recommended by the *Beacon* boys and girls to the Editor, or that ought to have been, and that we hope will be, in future, on that delightful last page of the *Beacon*, which is really our letter-writing to each other, even though we each address the chair, as in all big conferences.

Oh—and we have refreshments at our Beacon Party! You always have refreshments at a party, or else it's nothing but a mere meeting.

I think it could all be worked out, almost as well, too, without a magic lantern. It's wonderful that things can usually be done some other way. Where there's a will, whether there's a magic lantern or not, there's always a way!

The Girl Who Went.

A group of high-school girls stopped on their way home to talk over the day's happenings, and to regret the serious illness of one of their classmates.

"I should like to go to see her," said one, "but it wouldn't do any good. Margery can't see any one."

"Of course not. We can go as soon as she's better."

"But might we not call, anyway?" asked Laura, thoughtfully.

"What's the use? She couldn't see us yet."

Laura walked home, still thoughtful.

"Mother," she said, when she had laid down her books, "could I call at Margery's house, just to inquire for her, and leave my card?"

"Certainly, my dear. Write a little message on your card, and draw a line through

the formal 'Miss.' That makes it more cordial."

At the door of her schoolmate's house, the maid told Laura that the patient was better; but she hastened to add, "She does not see any visitors."

"Oh, no. I did not expect to see her," Laura answered, and she gave the maid her card.

That was not the last of Laura's calls. Several times before Margery was convalescent, her card, with its pleasant message, sometimes accompanied with a rose or a few violets, brightened the dragging days in the dim room.

Several months later the group of high-school girls stopped again on their way home: this time Margery was among them.

"I do think you are very ungrateful, Margery," one was saying. "I am sure we all went just as soon as we knew you could see us."

"I know you did, and it was good of you: I'm not ungrateful, Jean. But Laura"—she laid an affectionate hand on her friend's arm—"came when she knew she couldn't see me. That was what counted so much."

Youth's Companion.

The Five Fairies.

THERE was once a little girl who had careless fingers. Of course they did not really mean to be careless, but they were always losing her hair-ribbons, and forgetting to button her frocks, and leaving the dolls out in the garden all night.

One morning the little girl's fairy godmother came into the play-room. There had been a party in the doll house the day before, and the little girl had not washed the plates and teacups or brushed the crumbs from the floor. The little girl's pet kitten was playing with some tangled hair ribbons, and the child herself sat by the window in a mussed-up frock, and her hair was not combed.

"Now, my dear, this will never do," said the fairy godmother. "You must go out and find five fairies to help you keep tidy. Run along, and mind you don't come home without them!"

"But I don't know which way to go," said the child, beginning to cry.

"You must find your way," said the fairy godmother, "and the five fairies will know you if you don't know them."

So the child put on her hat and started

out to try to find five little fairies who would help her to keep tidy.

Well, the child went up and down the streets and the highways, peeping through the keyholes and into all the corners, but not a fairy did she see. There were only plain, ordinary, real folks about. So the child went farther still, across the meadows and down a hill, until she came to a path in a deep, dark forest. On and on she went, until she bumped right into a queer little red house under the trees. At the door of the house sat a fat little man in a red cap, spinning. Jane stopped and bowed very politely.

"Please, sir," she said, "can you tell me where I shall find five fairies?"

The little man never said a word. He just went right on sewing so fast that his needle broke and his thread knotted.

"Oh, that isn't the way to sew," said the child. "You should be careful and not pull the thread so hard."

"Well, suppose you had one dozen pinafores and two dozen pairs of knickerbockers and three dozen blouses to finish before sunset," said the little man, crossly.

The child looked, and there were the pinafores and the knickerbockers and the blouses, all cut out and piled in the doorway.

"Why, I'll help you finish them," she said.

So the child and the fat little man just sewed and sewed and sewed. When the last blouse was done, the little man looked up.

"You might go a bit farther on," he said, "to where my brother sits on the turnstile. Perhaps he has seen some fairies."

So the child went a little farther through the forest, and she came to a turnstile. There on the top sat a second little man. He was dressed in green from head to foot, and he had his arms spread out very wide to show which way the roads went.

"Please, sir," said Jane, politely, "can you tell me where I shall find five fairies?"

But the little man did not answer.

"I've been out here for days and days," he said, pointing to the roads, "and I haven't been able to get down once. Look at my face and my hair and my dusty coat!"

"Why, you poor little thing!" said the child. "Just wait a moment and I'll tidy you a bit."

So she took her pocket handkerchief and dusted off the little man's coat. She smoothed his hair, and she brought some water from the brook in the palm of her hand and washed his face.

"There, you look much better," she said.

"I feel better," said the little pointing man, "but I haven't seen any fairies. You might ask my tall brother at the fork of the roads if he's seen any. He is just a little way ahead there, looking for his cap."

So the child went down the road, and, just where the little pointing man had told her, she saw a third little man, much taller than the others, but not very big at that. He was down on his hands and knees, looking in the grass and under the bushes.

"Pins and needles! Oh, my pins and needles!" he was saying over and over to himself. "What will Thumbkin say if I don't find my cap?"

"Is this your cap?" asked Jane, as she picked up a little round silver thing from under a leaf. It looked like nothing so much as a thimble, but the tall little man clapped it on his head and scampered away through the forest as fast as his legs could carry him. As he ran, he called back:



"No, I haven't seen any fairies, but perhaps my sister has. She is mixing cake on a toadstool over there. You will know her because she wears a gold ring about her neck," and the little man hurried on.

So the child looked about for a toadstool. Presently she spied one standing tall and straight like a real table. Beside it was the daintiest little lady that ever was, in a little pink dress that had short sleeves, and wearing a gold ring about her neck. She had an acorn bowl, and she was stirring very fast with a maple leaf for a spoon.

"Please, have you seen five fairies?" asked the little girl.

"Hand me that sugar," said the little lady. "That's right. Now put a gill of rose water and an ounce of dew and a measure of honey in. Now beat it well until I tell you to stop, and then, if you are a good child,—and you look very sweet, if your frock is unbuttoned and your hair is mussy,—you may wash all my dishes."

When Jane had stirred the cake until her arms ached, and then washed the dishes in the spring, the little lady said:

"You asked me about fairies. Suppose you ask the baby. I put her to sleep over there in the humming-bird's nest, but she's awake now. Perhaps she has seen a fairy. Babies do sometimes, you know."

The little girl peeped in a wee humming-bird's nest that hung on a tree close by, and

there she spied the little lady's baby. Such a dear baby, no longer than Jane's tiniest finger, but as pretty as the prettiest doll! Her dress was spun of gossamer spider webs, and her cap was of frost lace, and her cheeks were as pink as rose petals, and her eyes were as blue as the blue of the sky.

"Oh, you dear little thing," cried the little girl, taking the baby up in her hand. "You look like a fairy yourself!"

The baby laughed, a tinkling little laugh that sounded like bells. Jane looked—and what do you think had happened? There were five fairies right in her hand! There was fat Thumbkin, with Pointer standing very straight just behind him. There stood Tall Man in his thimble cap. There was the little lady in her gold ring. Last of all, there was the dear baby, so pink and sweet.

"Run home, little girl!" they all cried. "You helped us, and we are going to help you now."

So the child went home to her fairy god-mother with her hand full of fairies; and the five—Thumbkin and Pointer and Tall Man and the little Ring Lady and the Baby—helped the child all the rest of her life.—*Carolyn S. Bailey, in Kindergarten Review.*

It is the "every-days" that count. They must be made to tell, or the years have failed.
W. C. GANNETT.

THE BEACON.

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From the Editor to You.

ONE of the beautiful hymns of our poet-preacher, Rev. William C. Gannett, sings to us the message of the Holy Place where God dwells. It bids us find the Divine Life in all things, near and far. It tells us that the glory of the star is God's glory, and that the Master Life is the

"Secret of the April land
That stirs the field to flowers."

You and I may know what this means, if we will think how wonderful it is that on the bare fields, by the road-sides, and in the gardens flowers have sprung up. A little rain, a little sunshine, are all that is needed, we say. But sunbeams are mighty forces that make over our world from its winter bareness to the green and flowered loveliness of spring. Shall we remember to think that it is God who works this great change?

When I was a little girl, I went to see a magician perform his tricks. He showed us a flower-pot filled with earth, which he said contained a seed. This he set on a table and held over it a paste-board cone that quite hid it from view. When he raised the cone again, we saw a pot containing a small plant just starting from a seed. Again he covered it and said some words, and, when he lifted the cone, there was a pot containing a small rose tree, with roses on it.

The magician wanted us to think that he had made the plant grow from the seed in a moment of time. It all seemed very mysterious and wonderful to the children, who could not know what secret way he had of changing the flower pots and putting one in the place of another. The real wonder was in the power of a seed to sprout and grow to be the plant, not in a moment, but in the right time, God's time for it. That same wonder is taking place all around us these magic April days.

THE BEACON CLUB. A LEAGUE OF
BEACON READERS WHO ARE WILLING TO HELP.

[Letters for this department should be addressed to
Editor of *The Beacon*, 25 Beacon Street, Boston,
Mass.]

THE Editor's questions about the parts
of our paper which our readers most
enjoy have brought some excellent answers,
two of which are here published.

22 W. HANCOCK AVENUE, DETROIT, MICH.,
Feb. 23, '13.

Dear Miss Buck,—I want to tell you how much I
enjoy *The Beacon*. We have always had *The Beacon*
and before that the *Every Other Sunday*, getting them
each week through the mail, and with the aid of my
sister I have been keeping every copy as nearly as I
can to have all bound together some time. But I
think that the paper is nicer this year than it has ever
been before. I particularly enjoyed "Old Songs" and
"Adventure in a Mining Camp," and "The
Second Formula" was splendid. I am liking "By
Way of the Snow Bridge" very much, and I thought
that the whole Christmas number was lovely.

We have in our Detroit Unitarian Sunday school
a star system for perfect attendance which is a little
different from most, I think. At the end of each
quarter the names of all the pupils are posted, and
those who have attended regularly and have been on
time each Sunday have a gold star placed after
their names; those who have been there every time,
but tardy, have a silver star; while those who would
have been regular, but for sickness or absence from
the city, are placed on a "supplementary honor" list.
Then, too, the class which has had the fewest absences
during the quarter is presented with the banner, so
you see we all strive for the best record of attendance.

The Sunday school subscribes for a church pew
where any of the children who wish to go to church,
may sit. In this way we can give something to the
church.

Enclosed find two enigmas, which I hope may be
of use to you.

A Beacon Club member,

HELEN S. SAFFORD.
(Age 13.)

RECREATION CORNER.

WEST UPTON, MASS.

My dear Miss Buck,—We are four little boys who
go to Sunday school every Sunday. We enjoy *The
Beacon* very much. Our teacher has just shown us
how to do puzzles, and now we have made one for you
which we hope to see in print.

Your little friends,

EDWARD SMITH.
JOHN KNOWLTON.
ALLEN WHITING.
KENNETH BLODGETT.

Their Enigma is

No. LIV.

I am composed of 12 letters.
My 4, 6, 11, 12, is used in serving food.
My 7, 8, 10, 3, is made by using soap in water.
My 9, 1, 2, 6, is not far.
My 6, 5, 10, is a color.
My whole is a day which tells us of the coming
of the springtime.

ENIGMA LV.

I am composed of 15 letters.
My 1, 5, 13, 11, is the act of using.
My 9, 4, 2, 5, is an object in nature.
My 11, 6, 15, 15, 8, 3, is a country in Europe.
My 14, 2, 10, 4, is close.
My 9, 6, 4, 7, is to reverse.
My 1, 12, 15, 5, is well versed.
My 14, 12, 7, 2, is a numeral.
My 3, 8, 11, is a universal necessity.
My 4, 13, 9, is a pest.
My 10, 12, 14, 9, is an ungrammatical term.
My whole is a sentence for *Beacon* readers.

WYMAN STORER.

R. F. D. 2, BOX 23, AUBURN, NEB.,
March 5, 1913.

Dear Editor of *The Beacon*,—In answer to your
questions in No. 23, I will say that I have not read
"By Way of the Snow Bridge," but I have heard
those who did read it say that they were deeply
interested. When I get *The Beacon*, I generally look
at the "Recreation Corner" first. I usually read
what the Editor says and also most of the short
items and poems, and last night I read "The Runaway
Boiler." The pictures also are very nice. I like
the double numbers and wish every one would have
eight pages, even if it would have to cost twice as
much.

I am sending you a collection of puzzles for the
"Recreation Corner."

Yours truly,

HUGH P. STODDARD.
(Age 13 years, 10 months.)

Thank you, Helen and Hugh, for these
excellent letters and for the puzzles. This
is the first time our Club has had members
in either Michigan or Nebraska.

LITTLETON, MASS.,
March 2, 1913.

My dear Miss Buck,—I want to be a member of
the Beacon Club. I do love to get *The Beacon* paper
every Sunday at Sunday school. I go almost every
Sunday. I am in a class of girls. Maybe you
remember that one of our class wrote to you about
the play we gave.

I am twelve years old, and ever since I got *The
Beacon* I like it.

Your true friend,

MARCIA WILCOX.

Marian Gilling, fifteen years old, a member
of the Sunday school of the Church of the
Messiah, New York City, joins our Club.
She finds the poems in *The Beacon* helpful,
and mentions as one of her favorite bits of
literature the familiar poem by Leigh Hunt,
"Abou Ben Adhem."

A PUZZLE.

• Read the following:—

stand	took	to	taking
I	you	throw	my

HUGH P. STODDARD.

A CHARADE.

When the wild wind blows,
Then the sailor knows
He must my first.
When the clock again
Sounds its low refrain,
My second see.
When soldiers, in the fight,
Go best to left or right,
They use my whole.

Youth's Companion.

ADDITION AND TRANSPOSITION.

Start with an interjection; add a letter and make
a preposition; change a letter and make another
preposition; add a letter and make writing fluid;
prefix a letter and make a flower; curtail and leave
a small instrument; prefix a letter and change the
vowel, and you have two horses hitched up; behead
and leave a cooking utensil; prefix a letter and add
one and make a punishment for little children.

JOSEPHINE MIRIAM CHAPIN.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 27.

ENIGMA L.—*The Christian Register*.
ENIGMA LI.—*The Panama Canal*.
CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—*Beacon*.
FLORAL ADDITIONS.—Fox-glove, cow-slip, sweet-
William, larkspur, candy-tuft, ox-Alice.
POETICAL CONUNDRUM.—Bed.
Answers to puzzles in No. 22 were received from C.
Leslie Booth, of Montreal, Canada.